A Rather Ungoverned Bringing Up: Postwar Resistance and Displacement in *The World My Wilderness*

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Halfway through Rose Macaulay's novel *The World My Wilderness* (1950) seventeen-year-old Barbary Deniston is caught stealing eggs from a Highland hen by two Scottish farmers. The scene is broadly comic. Armed with a slingshot, she manages to hit one of the farmers before being yanked to her feet. As yolks leak from her pocket, the farmers question her about her identity and her origins, but she does not yield: "Barbary said nothing: one did not give information of that kind when caught; not a word, whatever they did to one; that was the first principle of the maquis. Not that most people were able to obey it to the end; it was known that the breaking point came sooner or later" (102). Barbary's reaction to capture marks her as out of place: only recently returned to Britain, she spent the Second World War living with her mother in the south of France. While there, she worked with the maquis, the bands of Resistance fighters who hid in the dense underbrush of the countryside. Barbary's first-hand knowledge of coercion was earned through her capture and beating by Nazis. She may also have been sexually assaulted. If the juxtaposition of farcical present and tragic past in this scene is unsettling, the unsteady relationship between those two registers serves only to amplify the absurd comedy of the theft. While Barbary's recent history of resistance, incarceration, and abuse has robbed her of a sense

of political rights and responsibilities, the episode registers that dispossession as comic delinquency.

This scene in the Highlands is typical of a novel that, though regularly noted as one of Macaulay's strongest, has proven resistant to totalizing interpretations. The novel is most immediately noteworthy for Macaulay's ability to capture the wasted landscape of post-war London with a sinuous prose that sprawls like the ruinous city itself. Macaulay seemed to envision this reception when, in a 1952 letter to her friend and confessor the Reverend J.H.C. Johnson, she called the novel "a meditation on Ruin, physical and material" (*Letters to a Friend* 300). As she indicated in an earlier letter, Macaulay also aimed to convey the metaphorical meanings of material destruction: "*The World My Wilderness*," she wrote to Johnson in August 1950, "is about the ruins of the City, and the general wreckage of the world that they seem to stand for. And about a rather lost and strayed and derelict girl who made them her spiritual home" (*Letters to a Friend* 27).

In line with Macaulay's invocation of "the general wreckage of the world," recent critics have read Barbary's plight as the distillation of broader patterns of postwar crisis. Lyndsey Stonebridge notes that Macaulay invests her protagonist with the guilt of the age, forcing her to bear "the moral failings of the wartime generation" through her trauma-induced criminality (*Writing* 96). In this reading, Barbary's criminality is an expression of what Stonebridge calls "hope perverted," the desire of young people for a better moral universe in the wake of war. Ultimately, however, the novel can only gesture towards this better moral universe, without quite bringing it to fruition (Stonebridge 98-99). Leo Mellor reads Macaulay's fascination with ruins as an explicit endorsement of the modernist yearning to establish order out of fragments; London's patches of wilderness become what he calls "zones of possibility" for Barbary and for

the reader insofar as they offer models of regeneration and renewal born of chaos (Mellor 174). Beryl Pong has connected the ruins of the city to the question of Barbary's development as a protagonist on the cusp of adulthood. In Pong's assessment, the ruptured geography of the city and Macaulay's distorted take on the *Bildungsroman* represent twin symptoms of the imperilled futurity of the immediate postwar period (92-3).

While Pong's reading of the novel offers tantalizing claims about the tensions between Barbary's regressive personality and the *Bildungsroman*, her commitment to spatial analysis leaves only so much room for considerations of novelistic form and its relation to national belonging. This essay seeks to deepen and complicate the connections between *The World My Wilderness*, the *Bildungsroman* tradition, and the plight of children displaced by the war. The comic scene of a traumatized egg thief illuminates two related problems central to *The World My Wilderness*. On the one hand, the novel asks whether the adolescent traumatized by war can be successfully reintegrated into a peacetime society whose codes—juridical, cultural, familial, and sexual—have been all but effaced during her experience living under Nazi and Vichy rule. Simultaneously, *The World My Wilderness* asks through which genres, and in which registers, the novel as a literary form can express the wartime traumas that catalyze its plot. Although Macaulay's novel bears important traits associated with a modernist aesthetic—an aesthetic that is historically bound up with the psychic and social ruptures of war—it embeds those traits within a predominantly realist narrative of family tensions and adolescent development. This is a fiction of demobilization, both social and generic: its struggle to fit the traumatized child maquis into peacetime society is coterminous with its struggle to represent her damaged psyche within the genre of the realist novel of individual development. The severity of Barbary's wartime

experiences—and, by extension, those of Europe—makes them difficult, if not impossible, to integrate within the frame of a popular, coming-of-age novel.

The vexed integration of Barbary, as representative figure for war-damaged youth, into the novel and into British society at large complements recent investigations into the relationship between rights, citizenship, and the novel. If, as Joseph Slaughter has argued, the European novel—and the *Bildungsroman* in particular—evolved in tandem with Enlightenment notions of the rights-bearing individual, and if both novel and rights suffered concomitant upheavals at mid-century, then Barbary's failure to adhere to the laws governing postwar British society indicates a kind of civic and characterological illegibility brought about by the breakdown of legal personhood in occupied France (Slaughter 4, 15). Stuck between nations, between narrative genres, and between war and its aftermath, Barbary embodies the difficulties inherent in the postwar rehabilitation of delinquent youth. Macaulay's tenuous embrace of the war-damaged child within a form unsuited to her containment foregrounds the limits of textually representing wartime trauma.

Familial Networks, International Politics

Macaulay's novel builds its allegory of national and individual development by insistently connecting micro-level interpersonal dynamics with the larger wartime and postwar socio-political landscape of Europe. Before the war, Helen left her English husband, a barrister by the name of Sir Gulliver Deniston. Shortly after her arrival on the Mediterranean coast, she met Maurice Michel. By the time of the German invasion, they had settled in Collioure with Barbary and Maurice's son by another marriage, Raoul. Over the course of the war, Maurice and Helen marry and have a son named Roland. Maurice and Helen thrive under Vichy, and later

Nazi-occupied France, because Maurice "collaborated mildly but prosperously from 1940 to 1945" (8). His collaboration is depicted as a casual acquiescence in the realities of the occupation: "Maurice…had done business with the Germans, had them to his house, rendered them services, accepted their presence with a cheerful, contemptuous shrug. They had won, France had lost; it was the fortune of war; what would you have?" (28). Maurice never actively betrayed anyone during the occupation—"not so much as one Jew," says the local abbé (155)—and he even sheltered escaped Allied prisoners on their way from France to neutral Spain. Nevertheless, Maurice's cozy relationship with the forces of occupation marks him as a collaborator; he is killed during the brief and violent swirl of retribution that followed the German exodus from France. He becomes one of 10,000 French citizens executed extra-judicially in the wake of the Allied landings at Normandy, and before a judicial process for punishing collaborators took hold (Judt 42).

This history of familial relocation, collaboration, and compromise serves as backstory to the novel. In the narrative present of 1946, Barbary and Raoul live under the shadow of an unexpressed accusation: Helen suspects that they were directly or indirectly involved in Maurice's execution. Though only teenagers, they spent the war aiding the Resistance, engaged in what the narrator calls "well-meant, if somewhat jejune…activities in the juvenile fringes of the maquis" (8). In the words of Barbary's Uncle Angus, a psychologist, they had "a rather ungoverned bringing up," the habits of which she and Raoul have refused to abandon (120). When asked by her visiting eldest son Richie exactly what kind of trouble Barbary and Raoul engage in, Helen answers frankly: "Annoy the gendarmerie and the local authorities. Steal when they can; trespass on private property; sabotage motor cars; molest their fellow citizens" (12). Their continued acts of theft, sabotage, and petty criminality on behalf of the maquis become the

pretext under which Helen sends the children away from her and away from France, a means of exiling them until their guilt can be assessed, or perhaps because it never will be. Both go to London: Barbary lives with her father in his well-appointed terrace house, while Raoul lives with his aunt and uncle. But it is in the ruins around the Church of St. Giles Cripplegate that the bulk of the novel takes place. Alienated by cold and orderly London, Barbary and Raoul forge a life amidst the rubble, stealing and consorting with army deserters and good-time girls who form what Barbary imagines to be a maquis of their own in the ruins. Barbary's continued intransigence puts her at odds with her law-and-order father, Sir Gulliver Deniston, K.C., a model of upright, if chilly, British common law and common sense. Barbary herself reflects that she and her father would never see eye to eye. "He stood for law and order and the police, she for the Resistance and the maquis, he for honesty and reputability, she for low life, the black market, deserters on the run, broken ruins, loot hidden in caves. All the wild, desperate squalor of the enfants du maquis years—would he even believe it if she told him? His clever, cultured, law-bound civilisation was too remote" (84). As this overview makes clear, *The World My Wilderness* maps the tensions of postwar political life onto a single extended family. Political disagreements between collaborator and saboteurs, as well as between the forces of postwar order and residual wartime anarchy, take the shape of familial struggles. In framing geopolitics as household contretemps, the novel domesticates the traumas of the Second World War, and thereby makes them legible for a British reading public whose own experience of the war, though sometimes brutal, differed in important ways from life on the continent.

Crossing Borders

This familial focus applies to the migration of characters as well. At multiple levels, *The World My Wilderness* maps the movement of people across geographic and national boundaries. Especially during the war, they slip in and out of state affiliations. Barbary's older brother, Richie, fights in the British armed forces, is captured by German soldiers, escapes across France, passes through Collioure on his way to neutral Spain, and returns to France as a victor following the landings at Normandy. Helen and Maurice's home serves as a node in the network by which individuals and information circulate during the war; it accommodates Vichy officials as easily as it does Richie. For her part, Helen attempts to drift apolitically through wartime and postwar turbulence in France; claiming no ideological affiliation, she prefers to immerse herself in gambling, reading, and forging medieval Provençal poetry. Just as her name suggests Hellenic affiliations, the narrative describes her in classical terms: she is like "the Milo Venus," her "neck a strong, rounded column" (17). Macaulay hints that even objects of classical beauty cannot escape politicization. "In a Greek-Iberian head-dress with great studded ear-wheels," the narrator tells us, "she would have been, almost, the Lady of Elche" (17). This seemingly casual reference to the Lady of Elche encodes geopolitical implications: discovered in 1897 outside of Elche, near Alicante, Spain, this 4th-century B.C.E. stone bust is considered a national treasure in Spain, one that provides evidence of the connections between ancient Iberia and the eastern Mediterranean. Soon after its discovery, the statue was sold to a French collector and displayed at the Louvre until 1941. In a telling collision of ideology and aesthetics, the statue's "tragic exile" came to an end through negotiations between Franco's victorious Nationalist government and the recently appointed Vichy regime in France (Moffitt 27, Bazin 71). Macaulay's interest in classical scholarship, and her friendship with the classicist Gilbert Murray, makes it likely that she was aware of the finer implications of politically enabled traffic in cultural objects (LeFanu 228).

Like the Lady of Elche, Helen represents the illusion of disinterested aestheticism, which cannot help but be swept up in larger currents of geopolitical exchange across borders.

Throughout her works and her personal life, Macaulay displayed a fascination with mobility, travel, and border-crossing. Rosamond Lehmann described her as "forever in transit" (qtd. in LeFanu 3), perhaps the byproduct of an ungoverned upbringing that combined travel and unsupervised outdoor play in Italy, Cornwall, Wales, and Cambridge (Mellor 172-3). This interest in travel and national borders flourished in Macaulay's novels of the 1920s. In *Crewe Train* (1926), protagonist Denham Dobie evokes the romance of border crossing as though it were a magic spell: "Not all the nagging *douanes* and impatient queues of passengers could spoil it. Say frontier, frontier, frontier, ten times, and the word unlike most words so treated, still retains a meaning. Love, hate, friendship, virtue, vice, God—these become as sounding brass and tinkling cymbals, but frontiers remain" (*Crewe Train* 35-6). For all the persistence of frontiers, Macaulay felt intellectually invested in the problems and possibilities of international governance. She wrote a lighthearted novel of intrigue set at the League of Nations, *Mystery at Geneva* (1922), which manages to convey a feminist yearning for "full participation and agency in the work of governance" while emulating the conventions of the romance novel (Hankins 4). Her interest in the League persisted as political and humanitarian crises proliferated in the 1930s. In a letter to her sister Jean in December of 1934, she recognized the difficulty, as well as the urgency, of British intervention in the affairs of other states:

> "Justice" is, of course, a fine slogan. But, in such an unjust world, a dangerous one. I mean, how are we to bring it about, except by force, and force is the thing to avoid. What is the good, e.g., of the League of Nations Union shouting for justice for German Jews, socialists, and Democrats, or for Italian Democrats, or Russian

> bourgeoisie, or for Hungarians in Jugo-Slavia (though this they are doing) when it can't enforce it? Of course the League itself is working half its time on all these European things, oppressed minorities, etc., but the drawback is that no one seems to care twopence about the oppressed of other nations except us, except when they are of their own political party. So we get called busybodies: as, indeed, we are, and always have been. […] I *think* it's a good thing, on the whole, though it makes us unpopular. (*Letters to a Sister* 63)

Despite the failures of the League to intervene effectively in the crises of the 1930s—Spain, Abyssinia, Germany—Macaulay continued to believe that some form of international governance could take shape. In November of 1940, at the height of the blitz of London and some six months before her own flat was levelled by bombs, Macaulay wrote to Jean, "Gilbert Murray says *all* the machinery for political and economic federation after the war is in the League" (*Letters to a Sister* 118).

The totality of the upheavals of the Second World War would test all structures of international cooperation, and ultimately yield new approaches and new organizations for the management of war victims. Through characters like Richie and Helen, *The World My Wilderness* captures the national and geographic scattering of those who have been displaced by the war; yet Barbary most clearly bears the burden of displacement. She travels to England against her will; she would above all else have preferred to continue living, and wreaking mild havoc, in the south of France. In this enforced return to a nation she does not claim as her own, Barbary becomes a stand-in—admittedly, a privileged one—for the millions of individuals displaced by the war. If the Second World War was often characterized as a war of movement rather than entrenchment, the establishment of peace required a large-scale movement of its own

in the form of the migration of millions of people. Tony Judt estimates that between 1939 and 1943, Hitler and Stalin had collectively "uprooted, transplanted, deported and dispersed some 30 million people" (23). Some of these dispersed people were refugees, meaning they were homeless, stateless, and in need of resettlement. Others were categorized as displaced persons, meaning that they had, at least nominally, a national home to which they might return. For some, the process of return was easier than for others; 3.2 million displaced persons had found their way home by 2 July 1945. Of the 1.2 million French citizens found in Germany at the surrender, all but 40,550 had been repatriated by 18 June (Wyman 19).

Though she might like to return to France, Barbary must make do in London. In the absence of the Resistance-harbouring wilds of Collioure, she and Raoul take up the wastelands of central London as a new kind of native territory: "They surveyed the gaping shells, the tall towers, the broken windows into which greenery sprawled, the haunted, brittle beauty, so forlorn and lost in the wild forsaken secrecy of this maquis: it was their spiritual home" (57). Barbary's description of ruined London as a maquis indicates a linguistic slippage inherent in the term; a maquis was originally a kind of dry scrubland, typical of Corsica and the Mediterranean coast of France. During the Second World War, as fighters of the Resistance took to hiding out in the countryside, they took on the name of their own environment (*OED*). The wasteland camouflages its occupants; the locus of resistance becomes a name for the resistor herself. "It had familiarity," the narrator says of London's ruinous landscape, "as of a place long known; it had the clear, dark logic of a dream; it made a lunatic sense, as the unshattered streets and squares did not; it was the country that one's soul recognised and knew" (61). These quotations represent only two of the many and rapturous descriptions of blitz damage that appear regularly throughout the novel. Through these repeated invocations of bombsites as maquis, Macaulay

draws connections among the ruins of London, Barbary's war-troubled mind, and the plight of Europe after the war.

Children, Rights, Trauma

Unable to shake off the lessons of the war, Barbary seizes on the ruins of London as her "spiritual home" and "the country [her] soul recognizes" as a means of coping with her forcible removal from France. She was not alone in finding an odd familiarity and consolation in the places and patterns of wartime behaviour. In the wake of the war, psychologists and social scientists were actively concerned about the effects the war and its attendant deprivations would have on the youth of Europe. For children affected by the conflict, reintegration to a peacetime order could be especially difficult. Dorothy Macardle, Irish novelist and popular historian, detailed the difficulties of this process in *Children of Europe: A Study of the Children of Liberated Countries* (1949). Even four years after the cessation of hostilities, Macardle notes, the effects of the conflict were still poorly understood. "In ten years more will be known. All we know at present is that there are thousands upon thousands of children in Europe in whom desolation and unendurable memories are hardening into cynicism or despair, and that all that is being done to help them is not a hundredth part of what is crying out to be done" (11). Macardle takes pains to emphasize that war had eroded the most basic structures of trust upon which children normally build their relations to figures of authority. France "had become a place in which men seized children and carried them off and put them to death" (Macardle 184). The inculcated fear of adults, both French Vichy forces and German occupiers, left children with a pervading scepticism and a pointed lack of optimism about the future. The literal and figurative destruction of their homes led children to stick together and to turn away from adults; authorities

at Displaced Persons camps in postwar Europe described child gangs forged in the concentration camps that would not tolerate being broken apart, despite an apparent absence of affection among members. One observer noted, “they will fight, even kill, to protect a child of their group” (Wyman 96).

As this postwar commitment to self-protection at all costs indicates, one of the more deeply rooted effects of the Nazi disregard for pre-war ethical and juridical norms was a proliferation of lawlessness in the occupied nations. The subjects of occupation took it upon themselves to challenge the legal abuses of Nazism through their own, smaller forms of resistance; black markets, shirking, and wastage became, in the context of totalitarian oversight, the junior siblings of sabotage and assassination. As Judt has put it, “to live normally in occupied Europe meant breaking the law” (36-7). A resistance to authority became the self-imposed duty not simply of many adults but of many children, who played a variety of roles within the broader European resistance movements, from bearing messages and training other children to carrying out attacks themselves (Wyman 90). With delinquency a matter of pride and honour during the occupation, postwar governments had to overcome an entrenched resistance to law and order; British police resorted to large-scale roundups of undocumented individuals suspected of petty criminality, while in France, a special Juvenile Court system was organized in the wake of the war to deal with unruly child survivors (Kynaston 112; Macardle 193).

The continued problems of juvenile delinquency in both countries stemmed from the sense of disenfranchisement fostered in children during the war. To be without rights under a stable legal regime is to be less than a full and complete human person, a condition which has important repercussions for individuals both real and fictional. Drawing on Hannah Arendt’s *Origins of Totalitarianism* and her shorter 1945 essay “Stateless Persons,” Joseph Slaughter has

elaborated on the connections between statelessness, rights, and fiction in the postwar period. Slaughter underlines the paradox inherent in the rise of human rights discourse after the war: the concept of universal human rights imagines a natural, intrinsic state of being in which humans will be unequivocally free, and yet under current geopolitical systems this universal vision can only be granted through the nation state (Slaughter 12). The postwar drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in 1948 could only address the massive human rights abuses of the war through the available language of international, rather than supranational, governance. In claiming a role for itself as the administrator of those universal rights, the UN legitimizes the rights of the individual only to the extent that it solidifies the claim of the nation-state over those individuals. Though *The World My Wilderness* makes no reference to the UDHR—to do so would be anachronous, given the 1946 setting of the novel—Barbary is nonetheless bound by the condition of statelessness in which she spent her early teenage years. Deprived of basic rights under Vichy, she has no corollary sense of her responsibilities to those others with whom she shares the polity. Her theft of money, food, and material goods while in the UK is done without malice, but also without consideration for those from whom she is stealing.

Although the novel does not mention the UDHR specifically, it does mention an important document that preceded and contributed to it. In his 1941 State of the Union Address, US President Franklin D. Roosevelt outlined what he called the Four Freedoms, which he took to be foundational tenets on which modern democracies are built and towards which the wider world must aspire: freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom from want, and freedom from fear. These freedoms were hailed by many in the Allied countries as a crucial statement of the aims for which they were fighting; Norman Rockwell completed a series of paintings

inspired by the Four Freedoms, the BBC commissioned a series of radio broadcasts dramatizing them for British listeners, and they were partially codified in the Atlantic Charter of 1941 (Borgwardt 8-12). The drafters of the UDHR, including Eleanor Roosevelt, integrated Franklin Roosevelt's terms into the preamble. The passage in question specifically recalls the origins of the Declaration in the horrors of the war: "disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind, and the advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people" (UDHR "Preamble" [2]). While the drive to build a global consensus on the rights of the individual superseded Roosevelt's more modest pronouncement, the freedoms he outlined in 1941 remained foundational to the mid-century discourse of rights. Their movement beyond strict political or civil rights—the right to vote, for example—towards social and economic security set the pattern for further expansions of human rights under international law (Johnson 20-3).

In *The World My Wilderness,* these four freedoms appear twice. In the first instance, Barbary and Raoul spend time with a trio of outlaws—two army deserters and a shop-girl turned shoplifter—in the ruins. Horace, the thuggish leader of the three, pronounces on the "Fascism" of the British police and armed forces: "'Let's see, what are those four footling freedoms we used to hear about—freedom to eat, freedom to speak, freedom to get about—what's the other? Freedom from fear, that's it. Well, who's going to have freedom from fear with those bleeding M.P.s snooping round after him?'" (80). Horace's mangling of Roosevelt's four freedoms seems to indict them as fantasies, or as corruptible in the hands and minds of those who would abuse such concepts for their own interests. But this passage accomplishes two things: the reference to the "freedom to get about" mirrors one of Rose Macaulay's own critiques of the limits to

mobility during the Second World War. In an undated wartime essay preserved with the Rose Macaulay papers at Trinity College, Cambridge, entitled "The Fifth Freedom: Getting About," Macaulay bemoans the increasing controls all governments put on their citizens during warfare. "To governments," she writes, "it does not matter that people should be allowed to be happy and free and go unmolested about their business but it does matter what they are up to; they must be watched lest they prove to be the wrong people in the wrong place or at the wrong time…There may come a time when we need passports and visas to go from one county of Great Britain to another" ("The Fifth Freedom" 4). She specifically links British restrictions on the movement of its citizens in wartime with German persecution of Jews and South African persecution of black subjects; while vastly different in their degree of persecution, such limits on movement represent differing applications of a similar desire for control. No published version of this essay has been traced, and it appears not to have been broadcast on the BBC, to which Macaulay made occasional contributions from the 1930s to the 1950s. Whether made public or not, this essay indicates that Macaulay was thinking about the emergent discourse of human rights and its connection to the nation-state, and that she saw liberty of movement within and across national frontiers as a key determinant of free citizenship.

The other effect of Horace's imperfect interpretation of Roosevelt is that it paves the way for a later remark by Barbary's Uncle Angus, whom Barbary and her father visit in Scotland. Having been alerted to her theft of eggs from his neighbours, he confronts her in hopes of determining the cause of her antisocial behaviour. "Naturally," he begins, "the owner of land on which one is purloining must be regarded as an enemy. But you know where such aggression might land you? In a police court" (106). The narrator takes over from Uncle Angus: "A flicker passed over Barbary's impassivity. Fear, he noted, observing her. She was frightened of the

police. She possessed no one of the four freedoms. Least of all, freedom of speech" (106). In this encounter between adult and adolescent, Macaulay marks, while modifying, an emergent discourse of rights focused on the traumas suffered by the victims of war. Uncle Angus transforms the conventional understanding of "freedom of speech" from the freedom to participate in the expression of ideas in the public sphere to a more basic act of articulation. Any extension of the self into the world could be dangerous. To speak is to risk confession, betrayal, and punishment; it has little to do with the projection of a public persona. Still less does speech appear, for Barbary, to be a means of accessing and expressing her own memories.

The dislocations of war affect not only Barbary's status as a fictional psyche imagined to be accessible to herself, a simulated human, but also our ability as readers to access her as a fully rounded character. For all that Barbary serves as our paragon of childhood war trauma—indeed, because of that trauma—she remains a difficult character to read. Macaulay's rendering of the war-damaged adolescent involves relentless deflections of any attempt to plumb the exact nature of her experiences and her own understanding of them. Other characters view her as a mentally underdeveloped, unintelligible bearer of wartime traumas. Sir Gulliver's second wife, Pamela, says Barbary "hasn't the wits" for the gambling that has taken in her mother; the crooks hiding out in the ruins of London alongside Barbary and Raoul see them as "nuts. But harmless" (72). In Barbary's first appearance in the novel, she is presented as delayed, childlike, with "something defensive, puzzled, wary about her, like a watchful little animal or savage" (14). From time to time she appears about to revisit some aspect of her wartime experience, only to suppress the memory. When her Uncle Angus asks her to consider telling him about her wartime experiences as a means of breaking the cycle of delinquency, she balks at the return of repressed memories:

> She admired him; she felt what the patients in his consulting room no doubt felt, that to talk to him would bring a fatal ease, an end to concealment… So she had felt before, years before (how many years? Two?) when keen eyes had searched her, questioning, demanding answers, trying persuasion before threats, before pain… But before pain she had told nothing; it was during pain, after pain, that she had spoken, and told—what? Darkness rolled in on memory and mind, a confused, saving oblivion, swinging shut a door. (107)

The door that, in shutting, temporarily saves Barbary from the pain of remembering, serves to shut the reader out as well. She is opaque before any attempts at psychoanalysis. It would be convenient if this psychological opacity were simply the result of shortcomings on Macaulay's part, who, at least earlier in her career, was thought to be more interested in flippant character sketches than psychological depth. But other characters, including Helen, Richie, and Sir Gulliver, are given interior monologues that betray a more typically novelistic complexity of thought, and more importantly a direct readerly access to those thoughts; Barbary alone displays no equivalent transparency.

Barbary's traumatic shutting down of memories is most complexly rendered when she is propositioned by Jock, a denizen of the London ruins. Jock sees sex as a natural and pleasurable pursuit for two young outlaws. Barbary demurs. She calls sex "that stupid thing" and describes it as "silly and uncomfortable" (75). When Jock asks if she has even had any sexual experiences, she does not respond. In lieu of disclosure by Barbary, the narrative provides a brief and disjointed view of her memories from France:

> She was silent; she would not tell him. A thin, fair young face, the face of the enemy, the harsh, broken French of the conqueror, the smell of the forest in

> October, of wild apples and wood fires and heath… later the maquis had killed him. … No one had known. They knew that she had been caught by the Germans, beaten a little, released with a warning. They did not know that she had met again in the forest the one who had ordered her to be beaten and released; met him three times, and the third time it was a trap. They had only known of the trap, and had praised her for her cunning. (77)

The passage marks a stylistic shift in the narrative: there is a sudden proliferation of parataxis, as impressions hang suspended without a clear order or hierarchy. The phrasing elides key details and therefore resists clear interpretation. She was "beaten a little," then released for unnamed reasons. Her subsequent meetings with the German soldier are not expanded upon; it is unclear who instigated them, and exactly what occurred in the first two meetings, before Barbary set her trap. The reader is left to puzzle whether Barbary felt, and acted upon, a desire for the human representative of her wartime oppression, or whether she was sexually assaulted. It is possible that the truth lies somewhere in between: under the pressures of war, she found herself dragged into the kind of sexually and ethically murky human contact that flourishes under conditions of political occupation. Whatever her initial thoughts on meeting the German soldier, Barbary commits herself bodily to the Resistance by turning a potential liaison into a political execution.

The Limits of the *Bildungsroman*

Beyond the fact of her assistance to the maquis with matters of theft and minor sabotage, Barbary's traumatic wartime experiences are never described in detail. For the most part, they serve as a murky justification for an otherwise obtuse insistence on perpetuating wartime resistance in the rapidly stabilizing British welfare state. This murkiness results in an uncanny

sense of readerly detachment from Barbary, the character whose experiences ought to make her the most sympathetic in the novel. The ultimate limitation on her richness as a character may lie in her total lack of transformation over the course of the novel. This runs counter to Macaulay's other protagonists, most of whom, as Alice Crawford notes, struggle throughout their respective novels to achieve some form of compromise between their desires for self-actualization and the constraints imposed by external, social factors (112-3). Barbary never grows up; in this sense, as Beryl Pong has argued, *The World My Wilderness* is a distorted version of the conventional *Bildungsroman* (104-6). In Franco Moretti's formulation, the *Bildungsroman* is the genre through which the ideals of self-determination and socialization come to a kind of resolution; the classical novel of development traces the increasing alignment between individual self-fulfilment and social usefulness, arriving finally at what Moretti calls "the comfort of civilization" (15-6). While Moretti insists that the *Bildungsroman* effectively collapsed with its earliest modernist incarnations, recent criticism has sought to map the evolution of the novel of development in an age in which national identifications are not as easily correlated with personhood. Slaughter has argued that one cannot reach the "comfort of civilization" in the absence of one's participation as a rights-bearing citizen of a political entity. "Both human rights law and the *Bildungsroman*," he writes, "posit the nation-state as the highest form of expression of human sociality and the citizen as the highest form of expression of human personality" (96). Read in this way, Barbary slips through the plot of the *Bildungsroman* precisely because of her non-integration with a conventional nation-state. An outlaw in France, she has not learned to subdue her rebelliousness in favour of integration with the more benevolent postwar welfare state; she is a socially disruptive force, unbound by responsibilities because unaccustomed to rights. Still stuck at an early stage of characterological development, she remains opaque to readers. The traumatic

effects of occupation and resistance therefore appear to readers not only as Barbary's non-integration into civil society, but also as the non-fulfilment of a narrative expectation—the expectation of development towards a socially sanctioned form of adult personhood.

In linking the collapse of national structures of identification to the collapse of nation-centric forms of narrative, *The World My Wilderness* becomes what Jed Esty has called a metabildungsroman. Focusing on modernist novels whose protagonists' development stalls or is thwarted at the intersection of the metropole and its imperial periphery, Esty argues that twentieth-century novels of development chart the breakdown of the unity between self and nation that had characterized the *Bildungsroman* (6). But rather than reverse or destroy completely the arc of characterological and national development, the metabildungsroman critiques it from within, "laying bare the contingent elements of a progressivist genre formed inside the framework of the nineteenth-century European nation-state" (13). Although Esty's main concern is with the threat posed to a nation-based genre by imperialism and global capitalism, his argument might be extended to the breakdown of national affiliation in the wake of another total crisis: during the Second World War, the disruption of rights and the displacement of traumatized political subjects opens up another vein for critique of the *Bildungsroman. The World My Wilderness* therefore fails as a novel of development because its protagonist cannot move towards Moretti's "comfort of civilization." Barbary cannot live within the nations that lay claim to her because she cannot identify with their political, legal, and social codes.

Macaulay's critique of the necessary developmental parallels between child, family, and nation coalesce in the final pages of the narrative. Barbary is caught shoplifting in London. A police chase ensues through the ruins that are her urban maquis. She falls into a deep, exposed

basement, injures herself badly, and passes into a coma. In the ensuing melodrama, Helen flies to London from France, and takes a spare bedroom at Sir Gulliver's house, where Barbary is being treated. Once Barbary's recovery seems assured, her mother chides her for non-conformity: "'Since you obviously don't know how to behave in Great Britain, I shall take you back to France'" (230). Sir Gulliver, who has legal custody over Barbary, is harder to convince. He wants to send her to a British boarding school so that she might grow up to be a law-abiding member of society. As a final revelation designed to loosen Sir Gulliver's hold on Barbary, Helen informs him that Barbary is not, in fact, his child; she was fathered by a Spanish artist with whom Helen had a brief affair in 1928.

As Helen had hoped, Sir Gulliver's response is an immediate and total renunciation of any responsibility for Barbary. "I don't want ever to see her or hear of her again," he declares. "By all means take your Spanish daughter with you, and do exactly as you like with her; it has nothing to do with me" (247). His instant withdrawal of love and support is striking; having no biological connection to and no fiduciary responsibility for Barbary, he relinquishes any love born of the parenting he did in Barbary's first decade. In this regard, the novel draws a parallel between the rights of natural born children to the protection of their parents and the rights of citizens born into the protection of a sovereign state. To some extent the narrative naturalizes Barbary's resistance to British life and laws, even as it illustrates the suffering inflicted on those displaced by the struggles of interwar and wartime Europe. Barbary has had little protection, support, or guidance from either parent, nor from the French, British, or Spanish governments; her development as a citizen, and as a character, has suffered. It has been, in all senses, a rather ungoverned bringing up.

At the close of the novel, Helen plans to take Barbary to Paris to study. Even at this late moment in the narrative, there is no indication that Barbary has transformed in any significant way. Helen intends to keep Barbary's Spanish ancestry a secret from her. Wherever she ends up, she will have only nominal ties to anyone or any place. Her future is not without possibility, but it holds little promise of emotional and psychological security. Unable to assimilate herself to the demands of postwar British life and of psychological realism, Barbary is exiled from the final chapter of what has been, up to this point, her story. Attention shifts to her brother Richie, the returned warrior who, at 23, is firmly Tory and Anglo-Catholic. Though out of step with the emerging Welfare State, he is prepared to move forward with the nation emerging out of the rubble. He surveys the wreckage around St. Giles Cripplegate and imagines reconstruction: "Before long, cranes and derricks would make their appearance, sites would be cleared for rebuilding, tottering piles would be laid low, twisting flights of steps destroyed" (253). Whatever Britain's chances are at building something new, Barbary would only be out of place; indeed, she has already left the scene.

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